

Let's Go Shopping -- at Yard Sales!

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By Cyndi Roberts

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In some areas they are mostly called garage sales, or rummage sales. Sometimes they are called yard sales. In Britain, I believe they have what they call "car-boot" sales.

Whatever the name, it is a fun part of a frugal lifestyle. Here are some of the ways I have found to save money by shopping yard sales.

Expecting your first child? Yard sales can be a great place to stock up on necessities. Everything from cribs to rocking chairs to bumper pads, blankets and clothing can be bought at much less than new prices.

Of course, you must use your good judgement as to safety and cleanliness issues.

If you have small children, be on the lookout for clothes in the next size your child will need. We all know how quickly children outgrow their clothes!

Clothes for older children can be picked up for a song, too.

Are your older children picky about brand names? Do what I did--I told mine to think of these clothes as brand new, they've just already been washed a few times!

Found just the shirt or dress you need, but it has a stain on it? Here's a pre-soak trick to try:

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Dissolve 1/2 cup of dry dishwasher soap in about a gallon of warm water. Add your garment and keep it submerged for 24 hours or up to 3 days. Do remember to test the fabric first.

Big money can be saved by buying toys and books for Christmas and birthday gifts at yard sales. Many sales will have brand new toys and games in the box at a greatly reduced price. If the boxes are not sealed, always be sure to check carefully and make sure all the pieces are included.

Toys to be repaired or refurbished are a big money-saver. Are your children ready for a bike? You'll find lots of outgrown

bikes at yard sales that just need a little cleaning up or maybe a coat of paint.

If you are a reader, as I am, you can save big bucks by buying books for next to nothing at yard sales. Even if you don't find a book you want to read yourself, if a book is very cheap, buy it and trade it for credit at the used bookstore!

Joke gifts for adults are another item to look for. Buying in the spring or summer means you aren't running around in December trying to find something suitable for that office Christmas party.

Always watch for gift wrapping supplies. Use your imagination! Grab that partial roll of wallpaper with border to match. Wrap a gift in the wallpaper and wrap a length of border around it; no need for ribbon or a bow!

Sometimes, you will even find actual wrapping paper and ribbon for sale at a yard sale. Never pass up a bargain.

Do you have a young adult going off to college next fall? Or one moving into his first apartment? Help out by looking for small appliances, sets of glasses, flatware, pots and pans or utensils. Then they won't be raiding your home for whatever they need!

Does your family love to work jigsaw puzzles? New puzzles can be pretty pricey--so just visit the yard sales. I've bought puzzles for as little as 50 cents and very seldom have I bought one that had any pieces missing.

"One man's trash is another man's treasure" is certainly true at yard sales. Some people just do not have the imagination to

see the many uses of different items. Money-saving opportunities abound for those who are able to see potential in unlikely objects.

Cyndi Roberts is the editor of "1 Frugal Friend 2 Another" bi-weekly newsletter, bringing you creative, practical tips to help you with budgeting, cooking, shopping, parenting and much more as you strive to "live the Good Life...on a budget". To subscribe visit the "1 Frugal Friend 2 Another" website at <http://www.cynroberts.com>

Home Security Yard Sign. Convincing A Potential Burglar That Your House Is Protected.

By Ralph Winn

A security system offers the the best protection against burglary and vandalism. When a potential burglar or vandalizing teenagers know you have a security system, they often pass over your home or business and move on to another. A security yard sign alerts a burglar or ne'er-do-well that you have a security system. Or, if a security system isn't in your budget or you don't want to deal with the installation process, a security yard sign placed in your front yard makes potential intruders believe you do.

How Does a Security Yard Sign Work?

Convincing a potential burglar or neighborhood hoodlum that your house or business is protected with a security system or video surveillance can stave off an impending burglary or vandalism to your property. Whether or not you actually have a security system, one glimpse of a security yard sign often scares a thief away. Why would he break into or damage your home or business when there is a more vulnerable house or business down the street?

Where Should You Place Your Security Yard Sign?

Effectively scare away anyone wanting to harm you or your property with a strategically placed and clearly visible security yard sign. The key to the effectiveness of a security yard sign depends on the placement. The following areas are ideal for a security yard sign: All exterior doors, Curb next to driveway, Flower beds and Garage door.

Homes and businesses that can be broken into or vandalized without interruption are a much safer bet for criminals. Advertising the presence of a security system or security cameras makes them believe your home or business isn't a good target.

Inform potential criminals that they are being watch or recorded or that the police will be alerted if they try to burglarize or vandalize your home or business. Choose a security yard sign from the many different types, brands, and sizes.

In addition to placing a security yard sign on your property, you can implement other low-cost home security items, such as dummy cameras and alarm decals. A home security yard sign is an

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inexpensive alternative to protect your home.

Ralph Winn has over 32 years of experience in the security industry. Throughout his career, he has developed cost effective security programs for numerous small, medium, large commercial and government properties and for many nationally known corporations.



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